THE COLLECTOR - 13

THE COLLECTOR - NUMBER THIRTEEN

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AN EDITORIAL BILL WILSON

This issue of "The Collector" marks a first in comic fandom. I'm proud to announce that "The Collector" is the first fanzine to ever feature an indepth, fully illustrated interview with fandom's most popular artist, our own John G. Fantucchio. I greatly hope you enjoy this issue, because all of us (especially John) have worked very, very hard to make this one, big, special issue. For this I feel indebted to John and all the other great guys who were good enough to take their time to contribute.

If you'll recall, last issue I mentioned my visit to John G. Fantucchio's home. Well, I thought you might be interested to know that on November 2nd I was greatly honored to receive a visit from John and his wife Mary..John brought with him all of the artwork and layouts for this issue along with a few illustrations he permitted me to keep in my collection. We had a nice, long visit in which I showed John my work area (of which he said he was greatly impressed), some of my older comics from my collection, some of my artwork, and a few other items which seemed to interest him. I was fortunate enough to arrange for Mr. Prince to meet John and give he and Mary a tour of the shop, which I'm sure they enjoyed. Later on we snapped a few photos and went out to dinner. I was glad to hear that John enjoyed his visit here, and I hope that he and I will be able to visit each other more in the near future. (I wish to thank John once again for all of his help with this issue. I'm sure you'll agree that the artwork and photography John did for the interview is among some of the finest work he's done for fandom.)

At present, we are in need of good WRITERS! So, if you are a writer, I would appreciate a sample of your work.

I thought you might like to know that John G. Fantucchio, aside from everything else he did for this issue, helped me plot this issue's Hyperman strip and also designed Hyperman's new costume. Again I thank him! ! ! !

That's it for now. Till January, 1969: Happy Holidays! ! ! ! ! ! ! ! !

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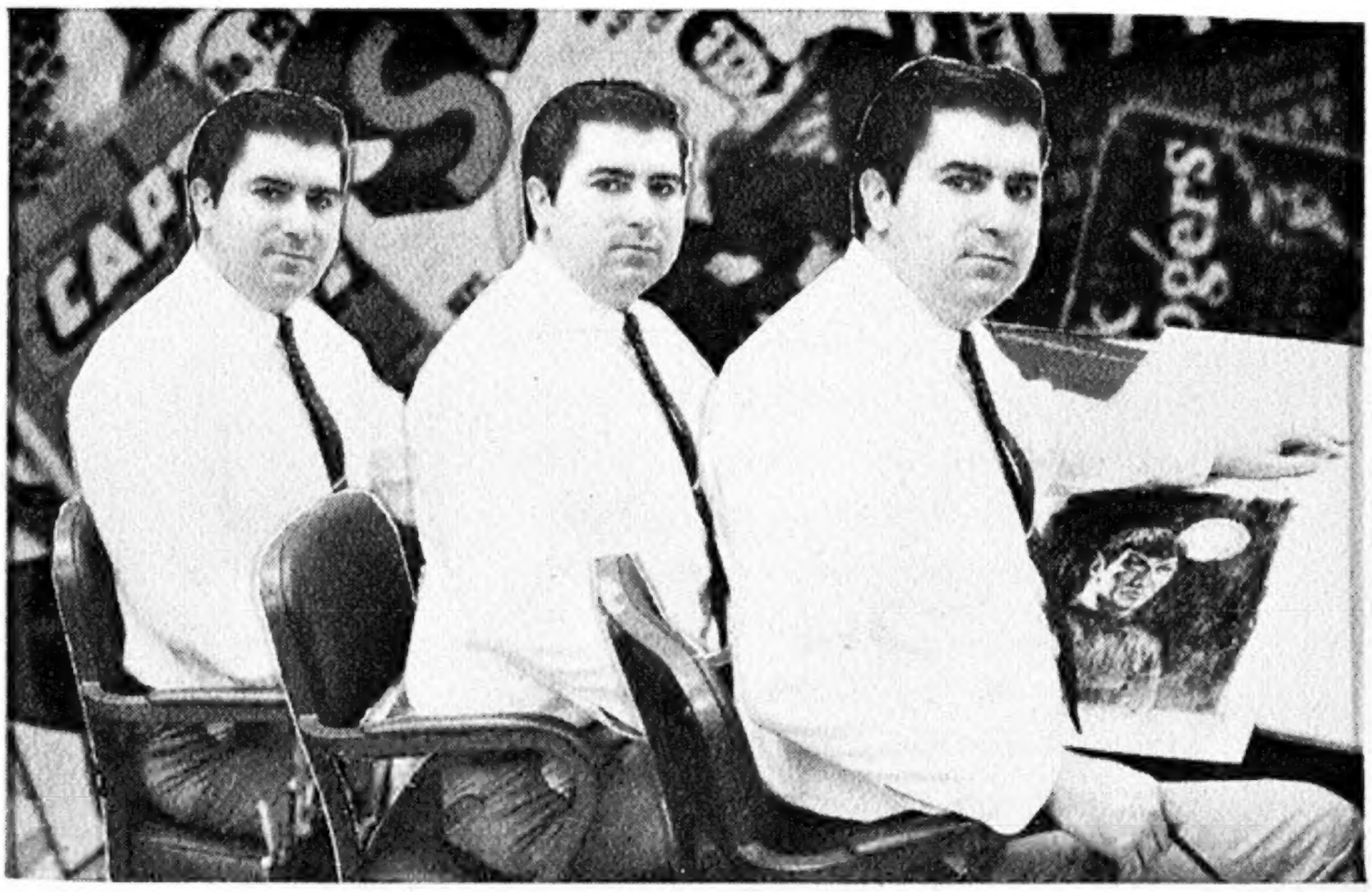


FANDOM AND THE ARTIST

AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH

JOHN G. FANTUCCHIO

Dynamic Illustrator
for Fandom's
Foremost Fanzines

This is an EXCLUSIVE interview with fandom's most popular artist, John G. Fantucchio. This interview took place a few weeks ago, by mail and in person, and was conducted by the editor, Bill G. Wilson. This is, we believe, the first article of this type about John to come out of fandom. No doubt there will soon be more. But, because we've been first, we think this interview will answer many of the questions you've asked about John, and will provide interesting and informative reading for all of you readers.

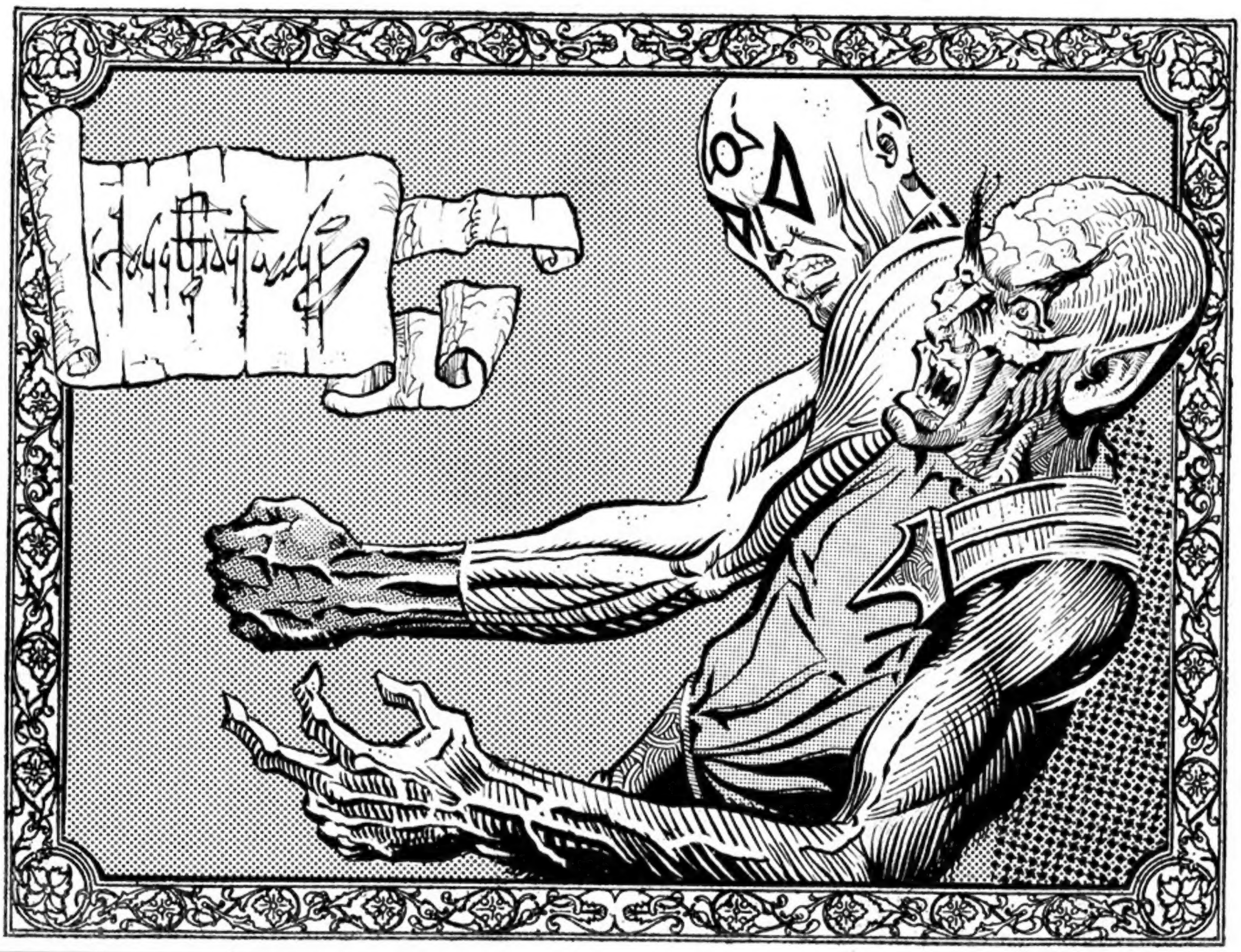
BGW: Well, John, I guess I should begin this interview by asking you when you became interested in comics, and the type you collected.

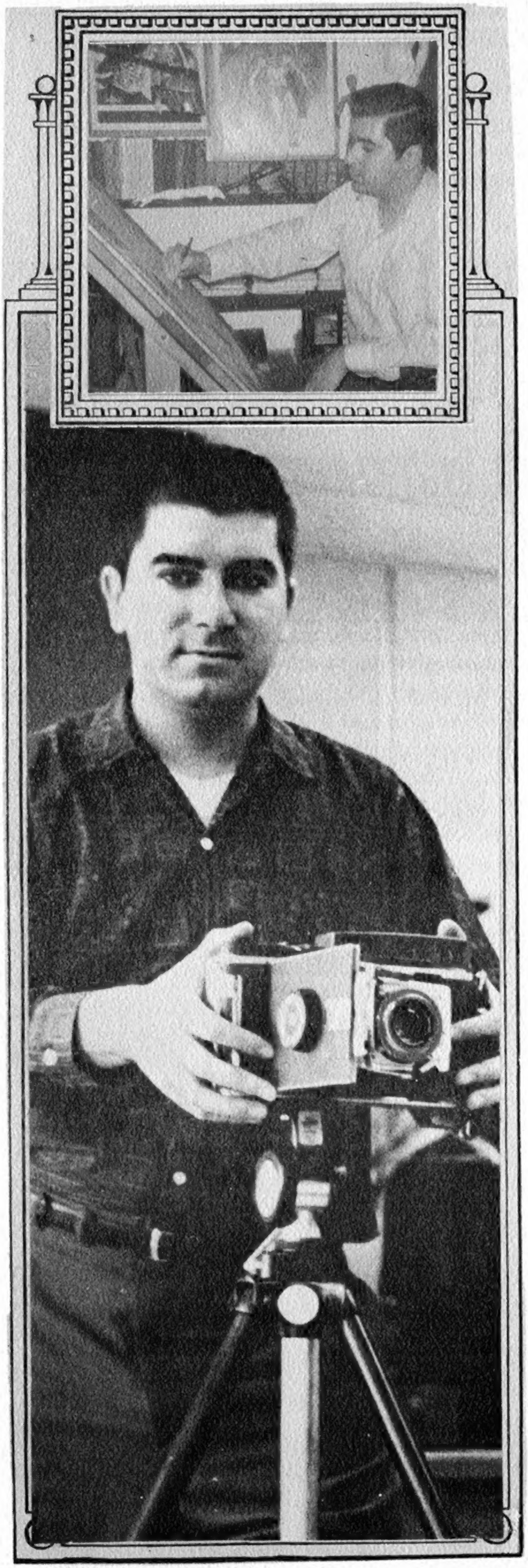
JGF: Well, Bill, I would say around 1946 or 47; at that time I collected mainly Superman, Batman, Captain Marvel, Daredevil, and The Spirit.

BGW: Speaking of comics, what do you think of "The Second Heroic Age of Comics", better known as the comic industry in the 60s? In your opinion, are today's comics better or worse than those of the Golden Age; considering script, artwork, printing quality, and amount of pages?

JGF: "The Second Heroic Age of Comics" is probably producing better drawn, better written books with much more thought behind them. Marvel Comics has given the comic industry a well needed shot-in-the-arm; it's a shame that a few companies have tried to mimic their style rather than searching for a new approach in visual communication. What we would all like to see, of course, is more pages; but with the never-ending rise of cost, it's impossible. The 12¢ comic book is still the greatest value - entertainment-wise and creativity-wise - in the world today. Where else can you get so much talent, so many illustrations, and a wide range of composition for a dime and two pennies?

BGW: When did you first become interested in drawing, and what did you learn to draw first?





JGF: Well, I think I was born with a pencil in my hand; and at the age of 5 or 6 or 7 I began to make simple scratches which resembled the Man of Steel.

BGW: Did you ever attend any sort of art school or take any art course at anytime?

JGF: While still in high school I took a couple of correspondence courses, which were a great deal of help. On graduation, I attended a fulltime art school in Boston, Massachusetts, for three years, which covered everything from art history to fine art painting, abstract art, and cartooning.

BGW: When did yourfirst become interested in fanzines and fandom, and how did you discover them?

JGF: It was around 1962 that I discovered The Rocket's Blast; and I have been getting this fanzine ever since. During the past few years I've been doing quite a bit of work for G.B.Love.

BGW: What fanzine was the first to feature your fantastic artwork?

JGF: The cover to Rocket's Blast Special #5; it featured an illustration of The Guardian inspired by the work of Jack Kirby. The original is now in a private collection.

BGW:Currently, what are your favorite fanzines, and which ones to you contribute to?

JGF: My favorite fanzines are many - a few are RBCC, TC, TCC, Bill Spicer's Graphic Story Magazine, Hero Hobby, Spa-Fon, Trumpet, and Gosh Wow! Those that I have contributed to are RBCC, TC, TCC, Hero Hobby, Gosh Wow! and On the Drawing Board.

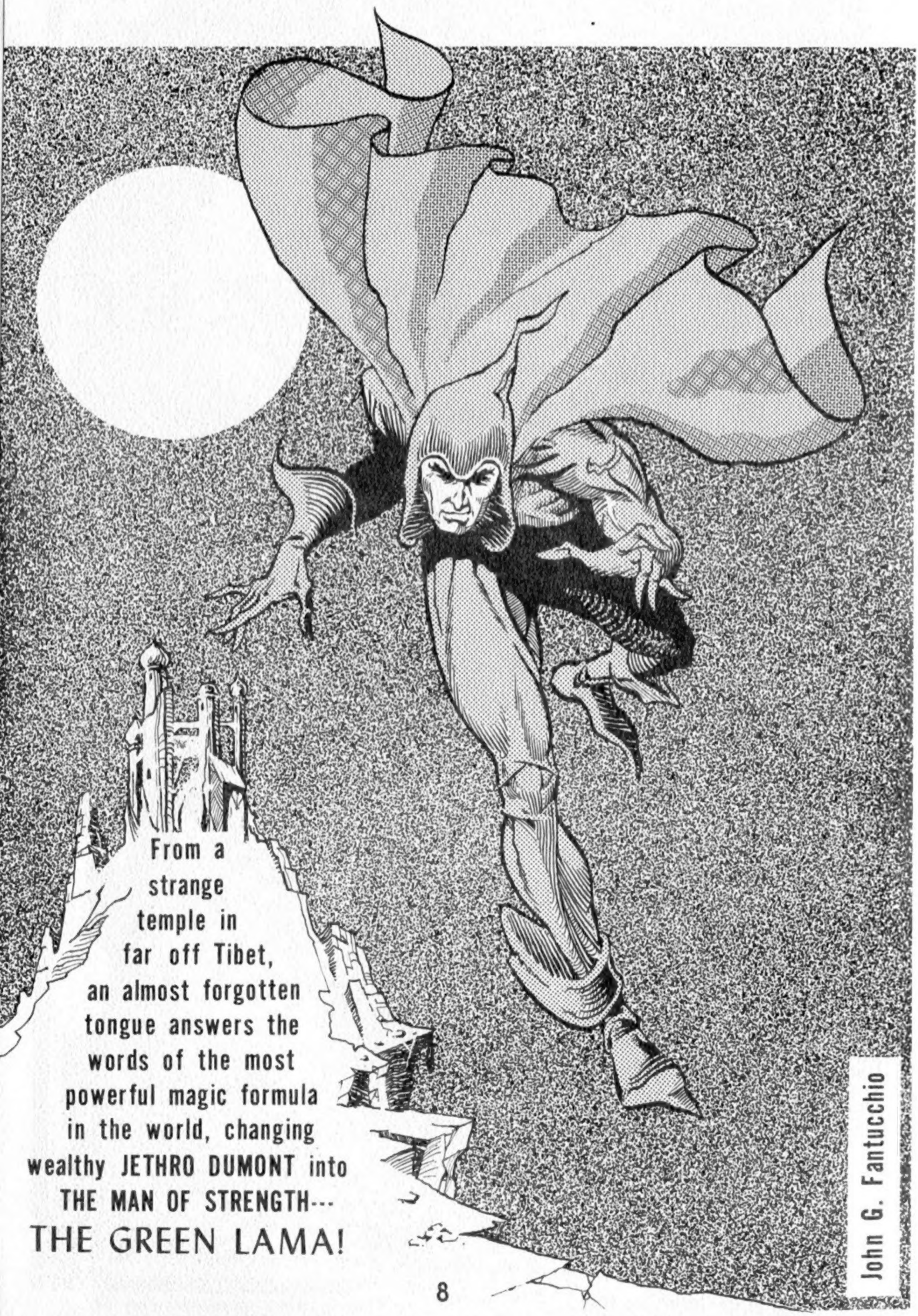
BGW: Have you ever contributed any articles, texts, or comic strips to any fanzine?

JGF: Not as yet, although a strip is near completion.

BGW: Would you like to sometime?

JGF: Yes - but only when time permits.
BGW: Are there any other fields besides comics that particularly interest you? (like science fiction, fantasy, sword and sorcery, etc.)
JGF: I would like to do full color cover illustrations for paperback books or magazines such as Creepy dealing with fantasy or sword and sorcery.
BGW: Besides reading comics and fanzines and contributing to fanzines, do you have any other hobbies?
JGF: Collecting old radio tapes, old radio giveaways, illustrations of particular illustrators that I admire - Ben Stahl, for one; Norman Rockwell, Frank Frazetta - these are usually full color illustrations. I'm also compiling information for a book on the history of the comics.
BGW: If it is within my rights to ask, what is your profession?
JGF: An illustrator - which encompasses just about every form of illustration you can think of, using various media such as pen and ink, watercolor, cassein, acrylics, oils, etc. It's alot of fun.
BGW: Have you ever considered going into the comic book field? Do you plan to sometime in the future?
JGF: Well, Bill, I've thought of it for quite some time; in fact, it was one of my goals a number of years ago; but somehow or other I got sidetracked and landed in the commercial art field; but the desire is still there - I'm ready, willing, and (I think) able. So who knows - perhaps in the near future.
BGW: Of all the comic-related artists around today, who is your all-time favorite?
JGF: This is a very hard question, mainly because I have a great many favorites for various reasons. All of these men

OM MANI PADME HUM!


From a strange temple in far off Tibet, an almost forgotten tongue answers the words of the most powerful magic formula in the world, changing wealthy JETHRO DUMONT into THE MAN OF STRENGTH---
THE GREEN LAMA!
John G. Fantucchio

have been individualists and highly creative: Kubert, Ditko, Meskin, Raboy, Crandell, Williamson, Eisner, Kirby, Raymond, Foster, Wood, Frazetta, Adama, Hogarth, Kane. All these men have had a great deal to say in their work, but perhaps the one whom I really relate to the most is Alex Raymond. ((I must agree. Raymond is truly one of comicdoms greatest artists))

BGW: Offhand, how many comics would you say you have in your collection?

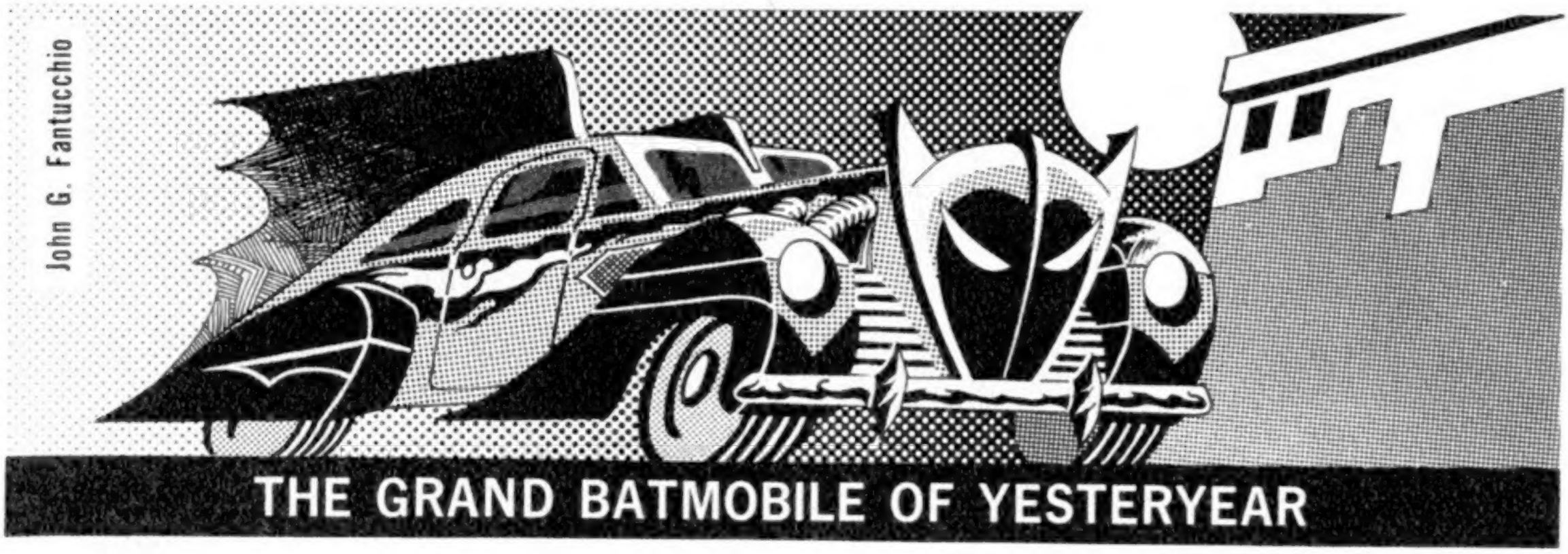
JGF: No comment.

BGW: Are there any particular years or companies that you collect?

JGF: I'm just trying to complete a few titles - almost anything by Mac Raboy, Captain Marvel Jr. especially; Superman - I just need a few of these; Batman, Captain Marvel, The Spirit, works of Frazetta, early Jack Kirby; and EC comics, of course. If there's anyone out there who has original artwork by Mac Rayboy, I'd like to hear from him.

BGW: What company is, in your opinion, the best all-around company? (considering, of course, artists, writers, layout, etc.) Or would you say it is a rivalry between companies?

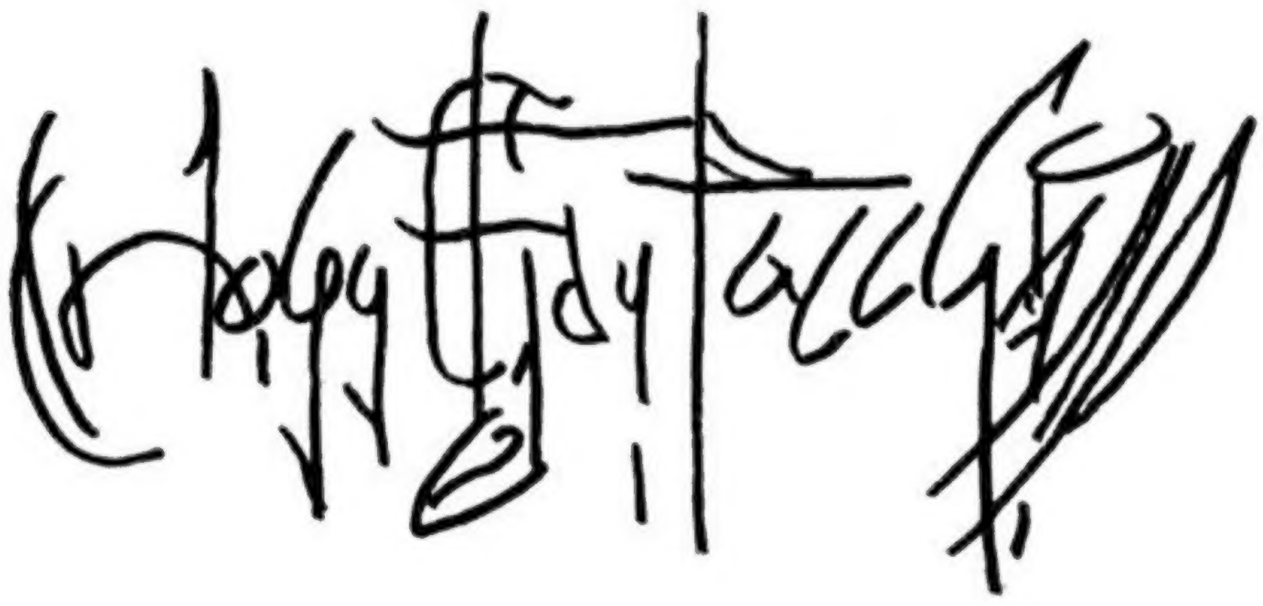
JGF: At the moment, I would say there is no 'best' company. Gold Key has put out some excellent stories and exceptional artwork; Tarzan by Manning was superb, as was Robot Fighter; Torak has been magnificently executed all these years, and the same artist, Giolitti, has handled many other titles - Gunsmoke, Have Gun Will Travel, Jungle Jim, a terrific job on Tonto - he's definitely one of myfavorites, and it seems to me he has received no recognition in fandom, which is really a shame. One would be wise to study his work.



Perhaps DC might have the edge right now, with Neal Adams doing so much of their work. I think his work will be sought after in years to come as the best contemporary style; he's fresh and has tons of imagination, beautiful composition and perspective. Marvel has perhaps too many disciples of Kirby, but the two that really turn me on at Marvel at this moment are John Buscema and Gene Colan; these two are completely different from each other and the rest of the bull pen; perhaps the reason I like Buscema's work is that he's following in the footsteps of Burne Hogarth and Gil Kane.

BGW: Just one more question, John, before we close. What, in your opinion, is the best all-time comic strip ever published.

JGF: I've got to say Flash Gordon. ((So do I)) You've really got to see all of Raymond's work and study it intensely; you can see the different things that he's tried to do with Flash with his accented lines, facial expressions, his beautiful use of solid blacks; and story-wise you never really get tired of reading it. I think anyone who has seem the Nostalgia Press book or has access to some very early strips - around 1936 - can see for himself the high quality of draftmanship. Take a look at some of your older comics and compare some of the illustrations from the early Flash Gordon, and you'll be able to see how many imitators there were at that time, and even now. Today we have men like Williamson, Starr, MacWilliams, Wood, Atkins, and a host of others who have been inspired and influenced by Flash Gordon and the works of Alex Raymond. Perhaps the only other man who can equal him is Harold Foster. He's still drawing as well now as he was 30 years ago, although his work is in the tradition of the old school of illustrators, beginning with Howard Pyle who today is known as "the father of American illustration." If you're lucky enough to come across some of Pyle's books that he wrote on King Arthur, pirates, and Robin Hood, you can see how Foster was greatly influenced by this man.

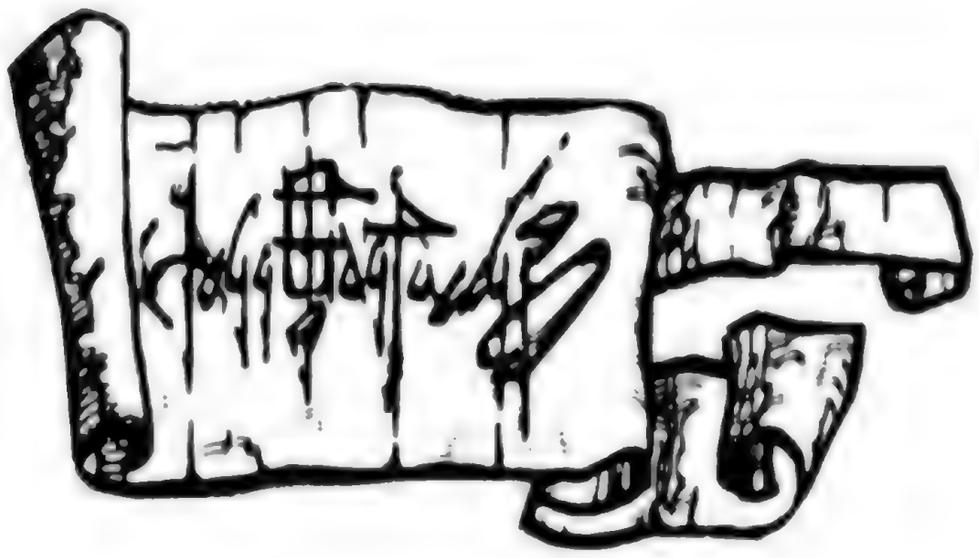


BGW:

THANK YOU, JOHN, FOR A MOST INFORMATIVE AND INTERESTING INTERVIEW; AND BEST OF LUCK ON ALL OF YOUR FUTURE ENDEAVORS.

JGF:

IT'S BEEN MY PLEASURE, BILL. I CAN'T REMEMBER WHEN I'VE ENJOYED ANYTHING SO MUCH; AND PERHAPS SOME DAY YOU'LL LET ME WRITE AN ARTICLE FOR YOU AS WELL AS FEATURING MY ILLUSTRATIONS.



((Well readers, there you have it; the first interview with John G. Fantucchio to be featured in ANY fanzine. We sincerely hope you have enjoyed this interview, and that it answers any questions you may have asked about John. Any and all comments on this interview will be welcomed; so we invite you to send in any comments or views you may have, whether they be pro or con. We think this interview is a success, and we sincerely hope that you too feel the same way.--Ed. Bill Wilson))

sketched from a photograph of BUSTER (Flash Gordon) CRABBE.

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1. Give a name to John G. Fantucchio's original character who appears on the opposite page. He may be hero or villain

2. List his powers, limiting them to no more than five.

3. Create an origin for him.

4. What does he carry at his left side?

ALL IDEAS MUST BE ENTIRELY ORIGINAL AND AS FAR-OUT AS POSSIBLE. ALL ENTRIES MUST BE LEGIBLY TYPED OR WRITTEN. ALL ENTRIES BECOME THE PROPERTY OF JOHN G. FANTUCCHIO, AND NONE CAN BE RETURNED. ENTRIES WILL BE JUDGED BY JOHN G. FANTUCCHIO, WITH AN ASSIST BY THE EDITOR, BILL WILSON. ALL DECISIONS ARE FINAL. THE NAMES OF THE WINNERS WILL BE LISTED IN T C #14. ALL ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY JANUARY 20th. SEND ENTRIES TO: BILL G. WILSON, TC CONTEST, 1535 ONEIDA DRIVE. CLAIRTON, PENNSYLVANIA - 15025

A PRESCRIPTION

Being Hints On How To Collect Comics

DR DECKER

First off, a confession. I've only been collecting comics seriously since about March, 1967, which means that I've been in this business for only a year and a half. Even so, I've managed to casually turn up almost complete collections of Thor, Spiderman, Shield, Daredevil, and others, and now my big project is going after a complete set of Action with Supergirl (never let it be said I was unaffected by a pretty face!), so despite my relative inexperience, I believe I've learned a few gimmicks about comicollecting I'd like to pass along.

If you are a new fan desirous of obtaining complete sets of your favorite comics, you have one thing going for you: it is not impossible. There are copies of every single comic ever put out...somewhere. However, the prices are something else. If you are a new fan, you are faced with the problem of getting all those back issues, and if you choose to buy them from dealers, you may find you have to spend at least $200 to get them all in decent condition, and no doubt more. If you need back issues of the more recent numbers, the best thing is not to get them from mail order dealers but locally. The best place is from little kids who may even give them away or sell them for a nickel each or so. Their mothers will be mildly contemptuous of you for wasting your money and happy that they're getting rid of the trash, but at all costs don't let them leaf through your latest ish of the RB-CC and see dealers' prices. The only drawback may be the comics' conditions, as little kids are none too gentle, but more on condition a little later. The next place is from your own friends who may not be involved in fandom and are no longer interested in comics. You may already know some persons like that, or you could spread it around you are interested in buying back issues. Getting money for the clutter will be what turns up prospects unexpectedly, and you may be surprised at who shows up to tell you they have comics for you to buy. (continued next page)

Sometimes these guys will give you their collections outright, or at least let them off cheap. If you have to pay as much as fifteen cents each, you are still saving tremendously, as well as building up good relations since your friend will be glad to make a profit. If only he knew...!

I do not recommend buying complete sets from dealers. It costs too much. As I have outlined, the only way is to inherit freesies a collection or pick them up locally as cheaply as you can. Trades can even be worked: I traded off thirteen Doc Savage books for about a dozen Tales Of Suspense, several Actions, and 75¢, for example. The time to patronize dealers is for scattered back issues to fill gaps you cannot fill in after you've exhausted every single local source. Then read over dozens of ads to get an idea of pricing for not only the comics you want, but for all comics in general. The information will prove handy many times when you may not have any source material on hand. Then check dealers for prices on an individual basis. You may be watchful, and when somebody gets drafted or suddenly loses interest and dumps his collection on the market, you can pounce and pick up some fine bargains. However, perhaps the best practice is to patronize small dealers who offer good condition comics and speedy service. Their prices may be higher than amatuer dealers who put out ads with pages of smeary printing and incredibly detailed single issuing, pricing, and conditioning, but service is better, and if they offer single prices for each individual issue in guarranteed good to mint condition, ordering for what you want is easier. These smaller dealers are anxious to please and undercut rather viciously the prices of the big boys like Held and Rogofsky.

Never pay too high a price for a comic, but again it is wise to pay a little more to get good comics. Sometimes, when you find a reliable dealer with rational prices and fast service, it pays to show your appreciation by ordering most of your needs from him. Dealers like him often pay back their regular customers with free comics, discounts on large orders, and even advance word on their latest acquistions for sale. If you're a friendly and good-natured, comic book dealing will be quite enjoyable, and the benefits worth the time and trouble.

Now for a word on the most important aspect of the entire business: condition of comics. I can offer only one bit of advice: never buy anything but the best. You are putting perhaps hundreds of dollars in your collection, so why cheapen it by buying poor condition comics just because they cost less? Pay a little more if you have to; it'll be worth it.

Of course, this is for your main collection, or your favorite comics. Most everybody has another section of their collection for "crudsies". Here is where you might cheapen up. The cover of a comic is such an integral feature of a comic that while you should never settle for a coverless comic in your serious collection, you can relax in your crudsies, load up on cheap old comics sans covers and settle down for alot of corny reading pleasure. Often you can buy dozens of coverlesses in a single bulk package for little more than the postage from dealers or collectors with lack of room, and if these are titles you would like to read but either do not care to or cannot paymint with cover prices for them, by all means stock up. Once in a while it's possible to get a hold of disattached covers and staple them back

to coverless comic bodies.

Storage of comics is important too. Put them away from the sun to prevent fading, in a cool dry place. Certain spray solutions are available that restore gloss to faded covers, and investing in a can would help any collection with older comics immeasurably. Putting comics in plastic bags, available from some dealers, would prevent excessive wear and keep the dust out. For larger comics, or slixies like the Spectacular Spiderman or His Name Is Savage, large-size Baggies will do in a pinch.

Well, that's about it from here. Remember, of all hobbies, comic book fandom is one of the most fun. It's still less expensive than stamp or coin collecting, and at least you can read a comic book!

Dwight R. Decker

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The Collector 14

Front and back covers by ALAN HANLEY. Another hilarious satire by DWIGHT DECKER. "Unsung Heroes" by DOUG FRATZ. Illustrations by ALAN HANLEY, MARTIN L. GREIM, KURT LUCHS, and others. These and many other features compose the contents of The Collector #14, which is due out in January. Only 25¢ for 20 pages of high-quality offset, wrap-around printing combined to form another spectacular issue of one of Fandom's finest fanzines! Order today! Send 25¢ to:
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CRITICISMS

LOC

FROM THE READERS

Due to space limitations, we have been forced to print but small excerpts of some of the very best letters of comment on TC# 12. We hope you will not be disappointed, as next issue things should be back to order.

MARK DILLMAN/834 Plass/ Topeka, Kansas

Dear Bill: Once again, you have come through with another very good (close to excellent covers it better) issue of The Collector (#12). I was glad to find out that someone (Duffy Vohland, in: "NEW: The Spectre and The Creeper") prefers Adams' ((Neal Adams)) art over Anderson's ((Murphy Anderson)) in The Spectre. I liked both./"Sgt. Rock vs. Sgt. Fury" was, although not mentioned as such, a rebuttal to the Sgt. Fury article of a couple issues back ((TC#9)) Bob Stump is, in my eyes, an expert on both titles, qualifying very well as the right one to write such an article. True, Sarge Rock IS the best all-time war strip./I truly enjoyed the rest of the articles and both covers.

MARTIN L. GREIM/Box 132/Dedham, Massachusetts 02026

Dear Bill: I rather liked issue #12 of TC, but I do have one criticism. First, why give a rundown on the latest comics? By the time you go to press most people have already bought and read the issues. That"s why I've stayed away from that type of thing in The Comic Crusader. Sure, if you like a particular issue, say so---but to review something most fans are aware of, is a waste of space./I like your zine Bill. It's one of the few around today that shows promise.

((Thanks for your comments, MLG. I've taken into great consideration what you and others have said about the news col, and I think you'll find a change for the better in this issue's edition. As far as TC showing promise, among few in fandom, let's not forget your zine either, MLG. You have to admit it's got what it takes to become one of fandom's finest!))

Dear Bill: ...It's about time I made my comments on "The Collector" #11, so that's what I intend to do now. The front and back covers were very well done by John R. Weibel, and the editorial, as usual, was exactly what an editorial should be. "Foreign Comics: U.S. Competition?" was excellent. It was informative without being boring. Bud Fern's and Mike Robertson's illustrations were very good, but John Fantucchio's artwork, as in issue #10 of TC, was the best. The Superboy satire, in my opinion, was a waste of space, and the artwork accompanying it was fair at the very best. Tom Christopher's very good to excellent drawings formed a sharp contrast to Mark Elias' Superman drawing which I only considered fair. The reproduction of the All Winners #21 cover was excellent. The drawing beside the ad for "Sword and Sorcery" was very poor. The "Hyperman" comic strip, although it had it's good points, just wasn't good enough to be printed in TC. ((I think you'll find this issue's Hyperman strip a vast improvement)) "News and Views" was excellent. If you ever stop this feature, you're making a horrible blunder. ((Who ever said anything about stopping it?)) The ad put out by Larry Heller had terrible artwork. Unless the artwork, if there is any in an ad, is at least good, please don't allow the ad to be printed. Your printing has improved, but there were still parts of Bill Schelly's ad that ended up being printed faintly. ((Due, partially, to the light original)) Like in issue #10, #11 was very good with an improvement in printing being a big factor in the overall betterment of "TC".

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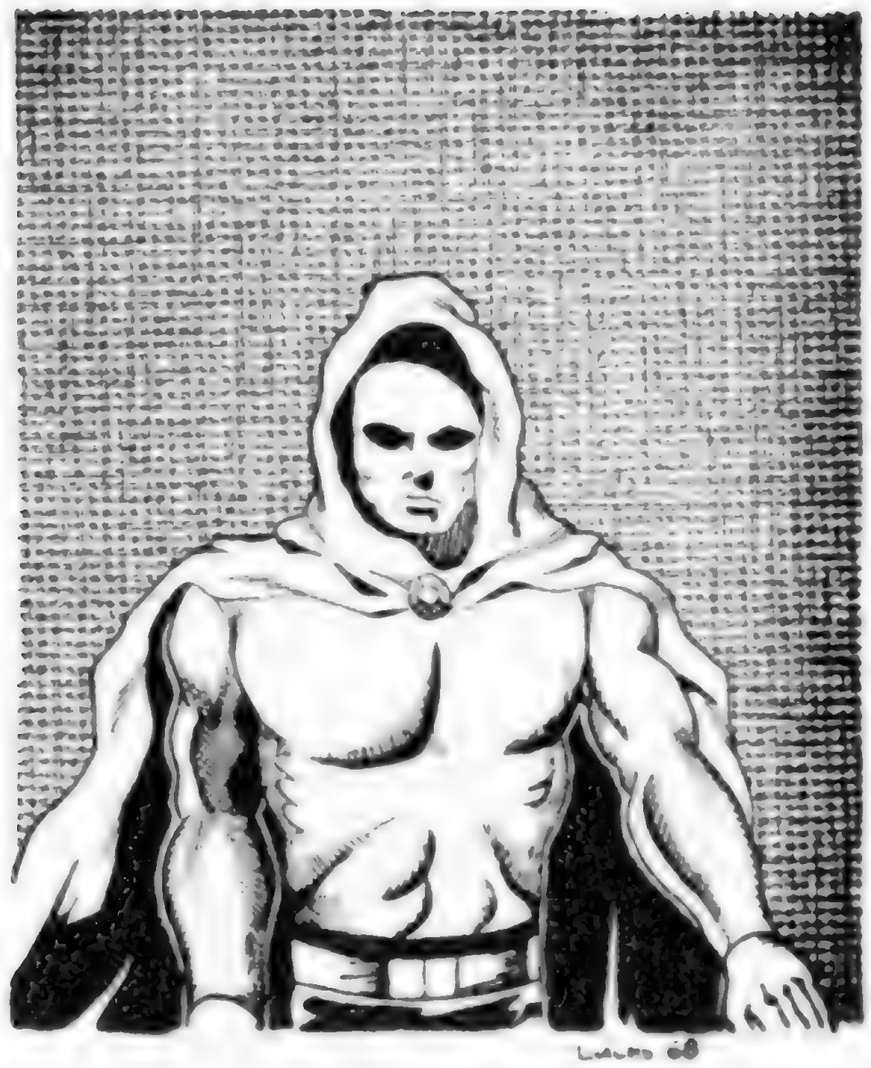


NEWS AND VIEWS

BILL WILSON

You are invited to send all news to the editor, Bill Wilson, at
1535 Oneida Drive
Clairton, Pa. 15025

THE COMIC BOOK SCENE: DC. It's a shame, but it looks as though BEWARE THE CREEPER will be discontinued in a few issues. I think it's a mistake, and I hope that DC's editorial staff sees fit to change their minds. .Deadman will be temporarily discontinued until a better and more suitable place can be found for it. In the meantime, Strange Adventures will be reprinting Adam Strange and Atomic Knights material./After a few more issues (or possibly even sooner) DC will be cutting their giants from 80 to 64 pages because of the current economical problems.//Marvel. The next issue of Marvel Super-Heroes will feature Ka-Zar./As you probably already know, Jack Kirby has dropped Captain America so that he can spend more time on the Fantastic Four and Thor. Steranko is doing the artwork now, which, I must say, is some of his best./Duffy Vohland informs me that the Banshee will be brought back soon and that the inhumans will be getting their own book soon.

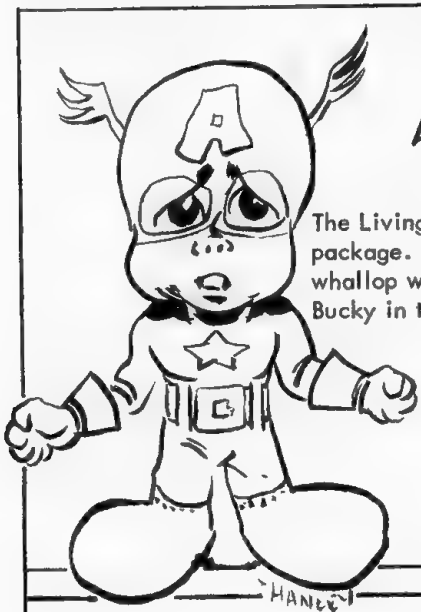
SHADES OF SERIALS DEPT.: Our local radio station, WTAE in Pittsburgh is currently featuring a "Chickenman" radio serial Monday through Friday at intervening hours. It's pretty funny, and worth listening to, if you're able to. One of his 'famous' quotes is: "Remember kiddies! The best way to prevent forest fires is to stay out of forests!"

THE ALLEY AWARDS: About this time, the Alley Award ballots are being sent out. I encourage you to cast your vote and to encourage your friends also. I'd also appreciate your vote for "The Collector", but that's up to you. But remember, no matter HOW you vote, the awards COULD depend on YOU. ((Our thanks to Mark Dillman for permitting us to use the first daily phantom comic strip from his collection.))

THE PHANTOM
By Lee Falk
??
FOR THOSE WHO CAME IN LATE —
400 YEARS AGO, THE SOLE SURVIVOR OF A PIRATE ATTACK WAS WASHED UP ON A REMOTE BENGALI BEACH--FOUND BY FRIENDLY PYGMIES—
HE SWORE THE OATH OF THE SKULL--THIS WAS THE FIRST PHANTOM —
TO FIGHT CRUELTY— INJUSTICE AND PIRACY-- AND MY SONS SHALL FOLLOW ME
FALK & BARRY 6/26
PHANTOM—GHOST WHO WALKS-- CANNOT DIE—
HIS DESCENDANTS FOLLOWED--JUNGLE-FOLK, THINKING THEM THE SAME MAN, BELIEVE HIM IMMORTAL!
--THE NEMESIS OF EVILDOERS EVERYWHERE-- FEARED AND LOVED--HE WORKS ALONE-- THE PHANTOM!
TOMORROW: THE MARKS

A CHILDISH LOOK AT COMIC HEROES

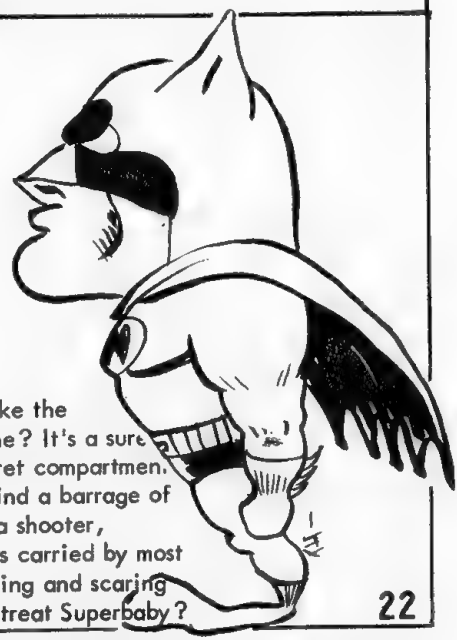
CONCEIVED BY: BILL WILSON ART: ALAN HANLEY



KID AMERICA

The Living Legend of WW II in a pint-sized package. And I bet even now he packs a whallop with his fists. If only we could see Bucky in this time period.....

BAT BULLY



....and he looks somewhat like the neighborhood bully, doesn't he? It's a sure bet that concealed in the secret compartment of his utility belt you could find a barrage of tricks; including the usual pea shooter, tomatoes, slingshot, and rocks carried by most bullies for the purpose of teasing and scaring little kids. Wonder how he'd treat Superbaby?

WONDER CHILD

Mommy's precious little Wonder Child? We wonder if she's all that precious when she starts fooling around with Mommy's magic lasso!

SUPER KID

As a child, Superkid uses his vast powers to aid his tiny friends. X-ray vision is excellent in finding lolipops lost in the sandbox; flight helps alot in rescuing escaped balloons; heat vision is very good for cooking hot dogs and hamburgers; super strength is a necessity when carrying fat kids to kindergarten; and, of course, what unsuspecting, center-of-bullying, meek, mild, alter ego could be without invulnerability?

HYPERMAN

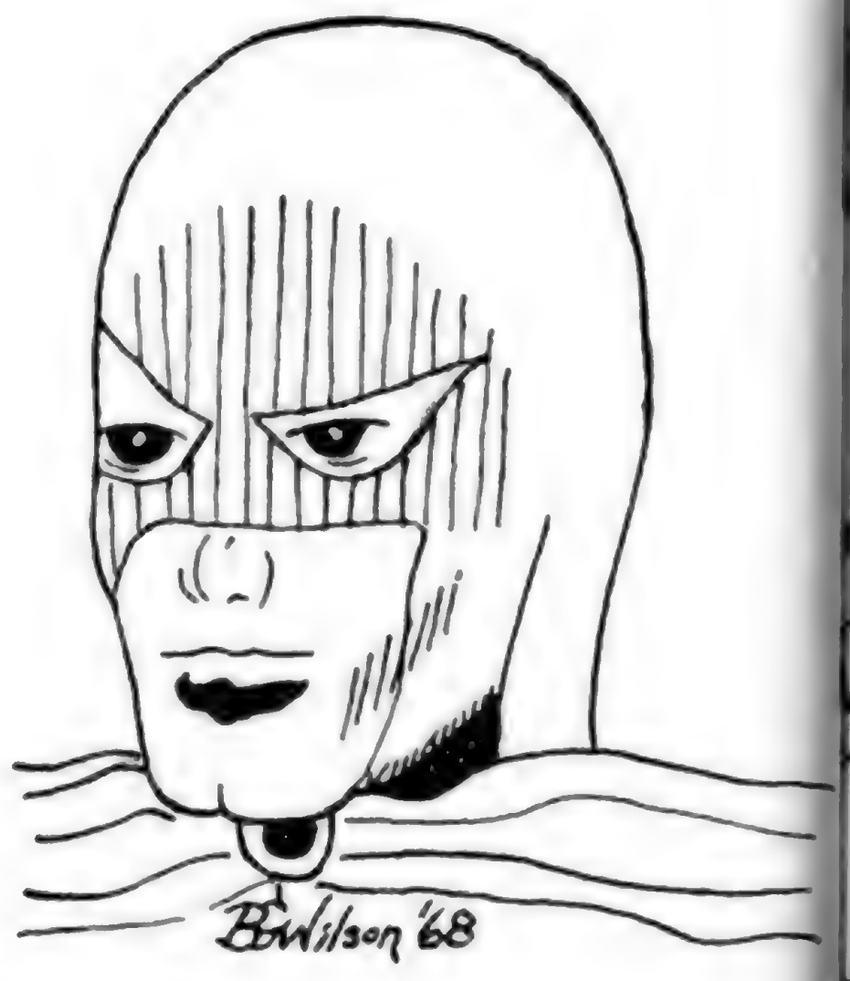
CREATED WRITTEN AND DRAWN BY

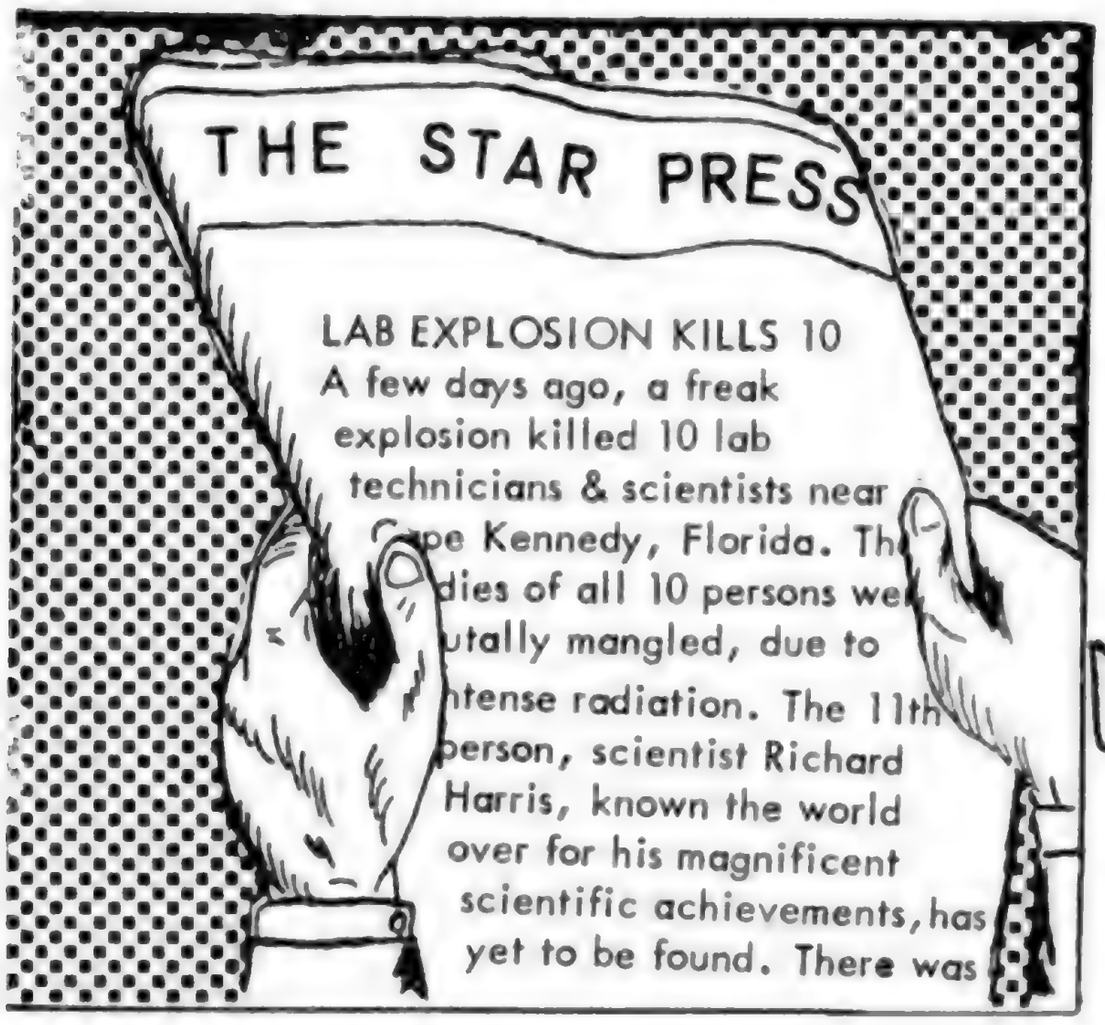
BILL G WILSON

"TO START ANEW"

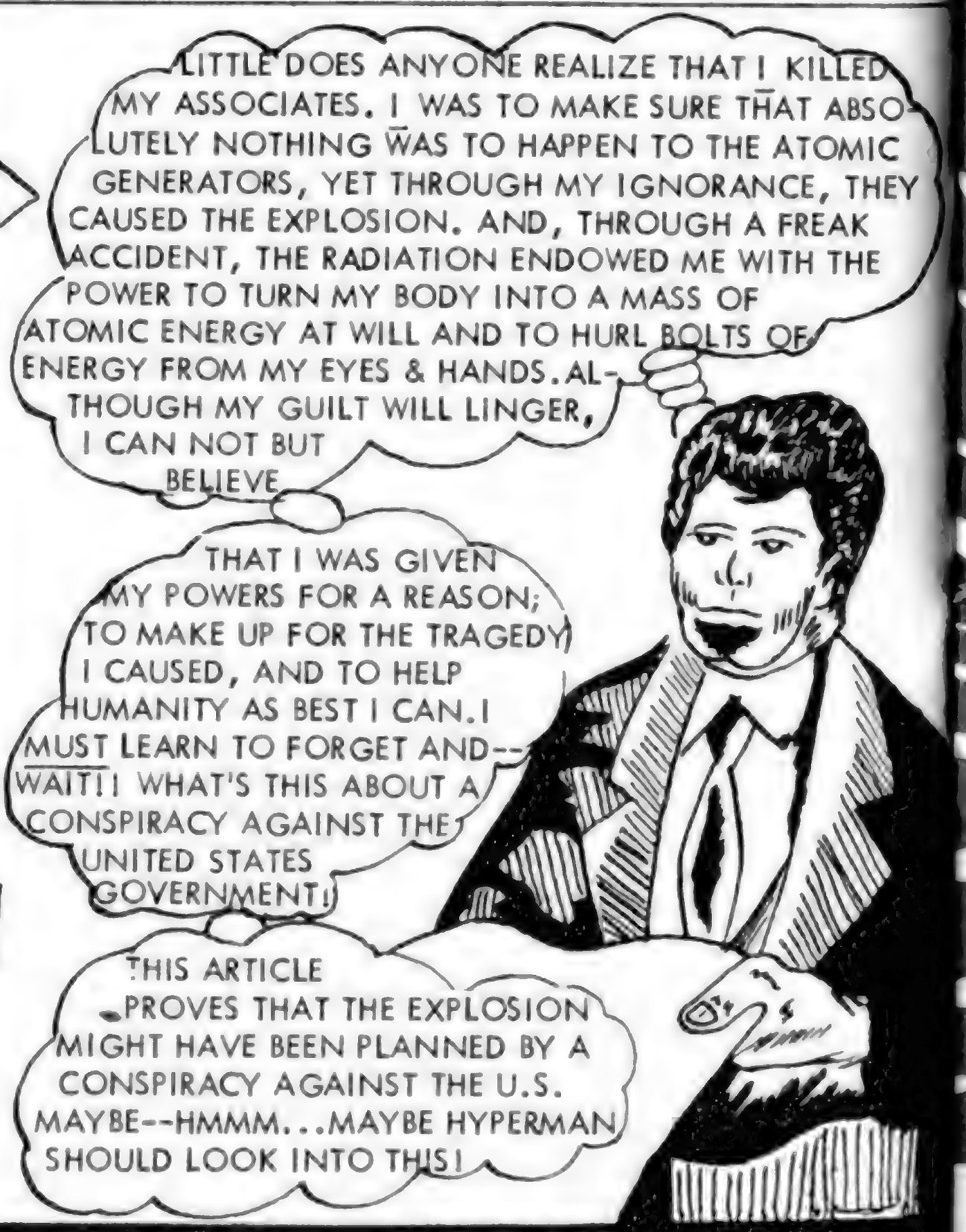
BASED ON AN IDEA BY

JOHN G FANTUCCHIO




THE STAR PRESS
LAB EXPLOSION KILLS 10
A few days ago, a freak explosion killed 10 lab technicians & scientists near Cape Kennedy, Florida. The bodies of all 10 persons were totally mangled, due to intense radiation. The 11th person, scientist Richard Harris, known the world over for his magnificent scientific achievements, has yet to be found. There was

IT HAS BEEN BUT 3 DAYS SINCE SCIENTIST RICHARD HARRIS GAINED HIS ASTOUNDING ATOMIC POWERS THROUGH THE LAB EXPLOSION AND VOWED TO USE HIS NEW-FOUND POWERS FOR THE GOOD OF HUMANITY. DUE TO HIS HAUNTING GUILT OF THE ACCIDENT, HE HAS GONE TO A SMALL TOWN, IN THE GUISE OF WILLIAM THOMAS TO TRY TO FORGET HIS GUILT AND BEGIN A NEW CAREER. WHILE READING A LOCAL REPORT OF THE EXPLOSION, HIS THOUGHTS REVERT TO THAT DAY....


LITTLE DOES ANYONE REALIZE THAT I KILLED MY ASSOCIATES. I WAS TO MAKE SURE THAT ABSOLUTELY NOTHING WAS TO HAPPEN TO THE ATOMIC GENERATORS, YET THROUGH MY IGNORANCE, THEY CAUSED THE EXPLOSION. AND, THROUGH A FREAK ACCIDENT, THE RADIATION ENDOWED ME WITH THE POWER TO TURN MY BODY INTO A MASS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AT WILL AND TO HURL BOLTS OF ENERGY FROM MY EYES & HANDS. ALTHOUGH MY GUILT WILL LINGER, I CAN NOT BUT BELIEVE
THAT I WAS GIVEN MY POWERS FOR A REASON; TO MAKE UP FOR THE TRAGEDY I CAUSED, AND TO HELP HUMANITY AS BEST I CAN. I MUST LEARN TO FORGET AND--
WAIT!! WHAT'S THIS ABOUT A CONSPIRACY AGAINST THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT!
THIS ARTICLE PROVES THAT THE EXPLOSION MIGHT HAVE BEEN PLANNED BY A CONSPIRACY AGAINST THE U.S. MAYBE--HMMM...MAYBE HYPERMAN SHOULD LOOK INTO THIS!

SO, IN A NEARBY ALLEY, THE ONE-TIME DR. RICHARD HARRIS CHANGES INTO A COSTUME; THE BRILLIANT COSTUME OF HYPERMAN!

THE FIGURE SOARS UPWARD, THEN---

LOOKS LIKE A RUCKUS DOWN THERE! I BETTER TRANSFORM MYSELF TO RAW ATOMIC ENERGY, SO THAT I'LL APPEAR INVISIBLE TO THE PEOPLE BELOW!

BLINDING GLOW OF ENERGY,

BLAZING ANGER, THE ATOMIC AVENGER LASHES OUT AT THE UNSUSPECTING HOODS

BY THE TIME THEY WAKE UP, THEY WON'T KNOW WHAT HIT THEM!

I STILL CAN'T FIGURE OUT WHO THOSE GUYS WERE AND WHY THEY WERE HERE. CAN THERE BE SOME CONNECTION BETWEEN THEM AND THAT ARTICLE? MAYBE--- -COUGH- OH NO! SOMEONE MUST HAVE THROWN A FIRE BOMB! THE PLACE IS GOING UP IN SMOKE AND -COUGH- I'M CHOKING! I BETTER FIND A WAY OUT OF HERE FAST, OR I'LL BE A GONER! MAYBE IF I USE MY ENERGY TO ZOOM UP OUT OF HERE I CAN CATCH MY BREATH. WELL, GUESS THERE'S NOTHING ELSE I CAN DO HERE.

ONCE I GET UP HIGH ENOUGH, I'LL BE ABLE TO CATCH MY BREATH AND GET OUT OF HERE! GOOD GOSH! MY COSTUME HAS CAUGHT ON FIRE! THE HEAT IS ALMOST UNBEARABLE! I BETTER GET OUT OF HERE FAST!

AFTER THAT INCIDENT TODAY, I'M NOT SURE ALL OF THIS IS WORTH IT. WHY SHOULD I BE THAT ONE SPECIAL GUY TO BE A HERO? I'M NO HERO AT ALL. INVESTIGATORS ALL OVER THE COUNTRY ARE LOOKING FOR ME BECAUSE THEY DIDN'T FIND MY BODY AT THE SCENE OF THE EXPLOSION. MAYBE IT'D BE BETTER IF I TURNED MYSELF IN. MAYBE THINGS WOULD BE EASIER TO TAKE THAT WAY. MY COSTUME WAS CHARRED TO NO MENDING, AND I THOUGHT THAT MATERIAL COULD TAKE ANY KIND OF USE. BUT I WAS WRONG; JUST AS I WAS WRONG AT THE LAB WHEN THE EXPLOSION OCCURED. I SHOULD HAVE STAYED AND FACED THE CONSEQUENCES. MAYBE I'D HAVE BEEN BETTER OFF. NOW---THERE'S THE DOORBELL. I WONDER WHO-- MAYBE THEY'VE FINALLY CAUGHT UP WITH ME.

LATER.....

WHY, IT'S REMARKABLE! IT'S A PERFECT FIT! IT'S AS THOUGH THE PERSON WHO MADE IT KNEW MY EXACT SIZE! IT'S UNBELIEVABLE; AND MYSTERIOUS! MAYBE I SHOULDN'T, BUT I'M GOING TO WEAR THIS COSTUME AND JUST WAIT FOR THE RESULTS. MAYBE I'LL BE ABLE TO FIND OUT WHO "MR. X" IS, AND WHAT HE HAS UP HIS SLEEVE. BUT ALL I CAN DO KNOW IS WAIT, AND WAIT, AND WAIT UNTIL I FIND A CLUE. AND WHEN I DO, I'LL HUNT DOWN "MR. X" UNTIL I FIND HIM, THEN HE'LL ANSWER TO HYPERMAN!

WHY, THERE'S NO ONE HERE. JUST A NOTE ATTACH -ED TO SOME PACKAGE. HMMM-- LET'S SEE------- " MR. HARRIS: MY NAME DOES NOT MATTER. LET US SAY I AM JUST A FRIEND. IN THIS PACKAGE YOU WILL FIND SOMETHING I HOPE YOU WILL BE ABLE TO USE; SOMETHING WHICH I HOPE WILL CHANGE YOUR MIND. WHETHER OR NOT IT DOES, I HOPE YOU APPRECIATE MY GESTURE."
IF THIS ISN'T ODD. HOW COULD THIS PERSON KNOW ABOUT MY DECISION, WHICH I MADE ONLY MOMENTS AGO? HOW DOES HE OR SHE KNOW WHO I REALLY AM? AND WHAT'S THE MYSTERIOUS THING IN THIS PACKAGE?! GUESS THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT. I'LL JUST OPEN IT AND--- WHY, IT'S A NEW HYPERMAN COSTUME! A NEW AND MORE IMPROVED VERSION OF THE ONE THAT BURNED THIS AFTERNOON! MAYBE I SHOULD TRY IT.....

SO, IN A TURMOIL OF INTRIGUE AND MYSTERY, THE FIGURE MAKES A VOW TO UNLOCK THE DOOR OF MYSTERY AND TO FIND OUT WHO IS THE MASTERMIND BEHIND THIS STRANGE AND MYSTERIOUS PLOT; AS THE NEW HYFERMAN!!!!!

EC MEETS

TOM CHRISTOPHER

When Dr. Fredric Wertham started his fight against crime comic books, EC, as it was the largest company, was under the heaviest fire. But, was EC really as evil, corrupting, etc., as the good (?) doctor had said? I don't think so. Oh sure, EC had a bit of unnecessary blood and gore, but in contrast to other companies, it was small.

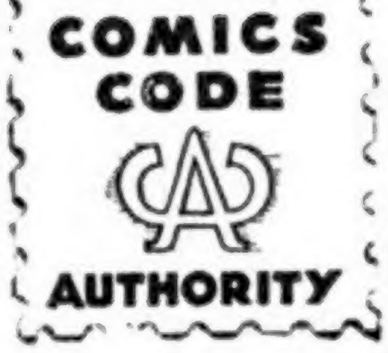
There is a fine line between what is art and what is cheap, horror, blood, and sex. 50 GIRLS 50 in Weird Science #20 could hardly be called 'cheap'. The team of Al Williamson, Roy Krenkel, and Frank Frazetta did one of the most beautiful jobs in comic history on this one. Every panel was a masterpiece, every figure was of art school quality. Every page was inked with lines so fine that even EC's reproduction couldn't pick them up.

EC had the best line of artists in the history of comics. Wood, Williamson, Krigstein, Krenkel, Frazetta, Torres, Crandall, Orlando, Davis, Ingles, and Evans: each one a master of pencils, inks, and anatomy.

Had the art - each panel - been displayed as a sketch or even a finished work at an art show, it would have won ribbons; but it was published in (oh horrors) comic books and, therefore, trash.

Typical comics from other companies of the same time were poorly done, and out to make a quick buck, to say the least. Art was out of proportion, overloaded to sickness with blood and cheap sex. Always inked with a heavy pen line, it takes too much time to use a fine pen. Heavy tones of sadism were usually there in great numbers. Girls being beaten, locked in trunks, and thrown in rivers--always bloody and sometimes dead. Backgrounds were usually fast, thick brush strokes, going anyway they choose, making an even sloppier panel than it was originally. Stories were written by disinterested writers who wanted a pay check. The endings had as much snap as a soggy potato chip and usually had trite characters such as vampires, werewolves, and other favorites.

by Johnny Craig for EC



of the peasants of some village overrunning the king's castle and forcing live rats down his throat. Of course, this sounds pretty horrible, but he desreved it, believe me. Horrible, but really almost delightfully told like a shildren's story.

This was horror to cringe at---to make a person wake in a cold sweat.

The average science fiction comic of that day (with the possible exception of the unknown Avon group, who Orlando and Wood often did stories for, and who published some of the best fantasy ever in comics; and St. John's titles, that Joe Kubert illustrated) were nothing but space cowboy-and-indian things, filled with pseudo-scientific garbage about "retro corbin gentrafliers" , princesses of the lost planet Blurtglap, and poor story lines. EC's were always adult, with plots that ran easily. Stories that ANALOG would be proud to print; and the Bradbury adaptions .....!

In 1956, after releasing the Picto-Fiction, black & white magazine sized books, EC died, leaving only MAD to carry on the once proud tradition. And in eight years that company would sell out to National Periodical Publications.

But was it right that they should have died with the fly-by-night companies? The same companies that took EC's sled and ran themselves into a grave?

EC lost money on some titles and said so in their mags, but they were that one outfit in many that tried to do something good with their mags, but Dr. Wertham and his blind band of flunkies, the PTA act, need a scape-goat--anyone, anything to blame current problems on--and they found one.

—Tom Christopher
1968

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MODERN COLLECTORS' REVIEW

We are in desperate need of contributors! So far it looks good — But we need your help! The theme for MCR: Dedicated to comics of the 50s through the 60s. Writers- send us an article! Artists- send some of your work! Just listen to what MCR #1 has to offer...

MCR will be printed via mimeo, with an offset-litho cover of Nick Fury, Agent of SHIELD/a guaranteed 35 pages of articles, columns, art, and what-not/large ad section/All on 8½"x14" white stock— and for the paltry sum of 30¢ a copy,mailed flat in an envelope! Sound good?— It will be! Providing this ad gets us some help! If you can write-send an article/if you can draw-send some illios! And do it now!!

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